

FINAL BILL REPORT

SHB 1510

C 44 L 09
Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Regarding disclosure of confidential information on birth certificates.

Sponsors: House Committee on Health Care & Wellness (originally sponsored by Representatives Ross, Klippert and Johnson).

House Committee on Health Care & Wellness
Senate Committee on Health & Long-Term Care

Background:

Vital records are records of birth, death, fetal death, marriage, dissolution, annulment, and legal separation, as maintained under the supervision of the state registrar of vital statistics at the Department of Health (DOH). State law requires that certificates containing vital statistics include, at a minimum, the items recommended by the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS). The DOH uses a standard live birth form, developed by the NCHS and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, as the basis for the state certificate. The non-confidential, public portion of a birth certificate contains information including: the mother's Social Security number; the county of birth; whether a Social Security number was requested for the child; and the name of the birth facility. Certified copies of birth certificates are available through the state registrar or local deputy registrar.

Under state law, certain sections of a certificate of live birth are not subject to public inspection, nor may they be included on certified copies of the record except upon court order. The Washington State Board of Health (Board) is authorized to require the inclusion within birth certificates of any additional information relative to the birth and manner of delivery as may be deemed necessary for statistical study. In addition to the federally established standard, the Board requires 11 additional pieces of information, each contained within the certificate's confidential section.

A person may request and receive vital records information without personal identifiers (e.g., names and addresses) for research purposes or statistical study where certain conditions are met in order to safeguard the confidentiality of the records. If a person requests birth certificate confidential information with personal identifiers for research purposes, however, he or she must obtain approval through a standing human research review board.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Summary:

An individual may review, without a court order, the confidential section of his or her own birth certificate. The person's request is subject to the confirmation of his or her identity in a manner approved by the Washington State Board of Health.

Confidential information provided to the individual who is the subject of the birth certificate must be limited to information on the child and must not include information on the mother or father.

Votes on Final Passage:

House	97	0
Senate	46	0

Effective: July 26, 2009